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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0947
INFO RUCNIRA/IRAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 000127

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [AF](#) [IR](#) [KPAO](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PROP](#) [TI](#) [UK](#)
SUBJECT: IRAN: BBC PERSIAN TV BEGINS OPERATIONS

REF: EMB LONDON (GAYLE) EMAIL TO DEPT 12/24/08 Classified By: Political Counselor Richard Mills, Jr. for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. BBC Persian TV launched its well-resourced broadcast operations January 14. Both anti-regime exiles and the Tehran regime cc
Iranians' Criticism, BBC's High Hopes; BBC Radio Farsi Unaffected -----

[1](#)2. (C) BBC Persian TV, boasting a sharply expanded staff and lavish studio facilities on Regent Street in London, launched its 8-hour per day

[1](#)3. (SBU) BBC World Service Head Nigel Chapman, as reported in UK press, said the BBC aims at 11 million viewers by 2011 in Afghanistan, Irar
Jamming Not An Issue -----

[1](#)4. (C) Karimi told Poloff jamming is not expected to be a problem; he said BBC will jump its broadcasts back and forth between two satellites
Large Budget but No Tehran Office; Many Recent Hirees Fresh from Iran -----

[1](#)5. (C/NF) BBC Persian TV has a USD 23 Million (GBP 15 million) annual budget. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office in 2007 had told Poloff BE

[1](#)6. (C) One staffer at BBC Persian, whom Poloff first met in November, is a 20-something who stated she had never traveled to the West, and he
BBC Enjoys Prestige, Claims "Balanced, Friendly" Coverage, Calls VOA Persian "Slanted" ----- ---

[1](#)7. (C) Somewhat ironically, according to press sources and Embassy Iranian blogger contacts, BBC is the overwhelmingly preferred source for f
Comment -----

[1](#)8. (C/NF) The long delay to BBC's start of operations, from 2006 to 2008, may have arisen, in addition to budgetary challenges, from unsucces
TUTTLE